

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (original): A process for producing outer shells of sugar confectionery articles, wherein a cooling member is immersed into a pourable or aerated sugar confectionery mass prior to its solidification and is kept in the mass in an immersed position for a predetermined period of time to define a predetermined shell volume, the cooling member having a temperature lower than minus 50°C, and the pourable or aerated sugar confectionery mass solidifying, under cooling, inwardly to form the outer shape of the shell.

Claim 2 (original): A process according to claim 1, wherein a mould cavity is filled with the pourable confectionery mass and wherein the cooling member is immersed into the mass prior to its solidification after it has been filled into the mould cavity and is kept in the mass in an immersed position for a predetermined period of time to define a predetermined shell volume between said member and the mould cavity.

Claim 3 (original): A process according to claim 1, wherein the cooling member has a temperature between minus 70°C and minus 250°C.

Claim 4 (original): A process according to claim 1, wherein the cooling member is made from solid carbon dioxide, preferably selected from dry ice and dry snow.

Claim 5 (original): A process according to claim 1, wherein the process comprises preparing the cooling member in a predetermined shape by use of a mould.

Claim 6 (currently amended): A process according to claim 5, wherein the material of the cooling member mould is selected from iron, steel, and mixtures thereof[[, preferably is stainless steel]].

Claim 7 (original): A process according to claim 5, wherein the cooling member mould is equipped with at least one outlet.

Claim 8 (currently amended): A process for producing a filled sugar confectionery article[[s]], in particular filled wine gum, which comprises the steps of

- 1) making an outer shell by immersing a cooling member into a pourable or aerated sugar confectionery mass prior to its solidification, keeping the cooling member in the pourable or aerated sugar confectionery mass in an immersed position for a predetermined period of time to define a predetermined shell volume, the cooling member having a temperature lower than minus 50°C, and the pourable or aerated sugar confectionery mass solidifying, under cooling, inwardly to form the outer shape of said outer shell as defined in claim 1;
- 2) filling the shell with a filling composition comprising edible ingredients, ~~preferably selected from food coloring, flavoring, edible acidulant, and mixtures thereof;~~ the filling composition having a water activity in the range of from 0.3 to 0.75g/ml;
- 3) closing the shell with a confectionery mass.

Claim 9 (original): Apparatus for producing sugar confectionery articles comprising:

- a. one or more mould cavities for holding a confectionery mass;
- b. means for transferring a liquid or aerated confectionery mass into said mould cavities;
- c. one or more cooling members or means for producing such cooling members;
- d. cooling means capable of reducing the temperature of the cooling members to a temperature lower than minus 50°C;

e. means for moving the one or more cooling members in and out of the one or more mould cavities;

f. the arrangement of mould cavities, cooling members and means e. being such that the cooling member can be moved into the mould cavities in such a way that a cup-shaped space is defined between the mould cavity and the cooling member.

Claim 10 (original): Apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the apparatus is provided with means for controlling the residence time in immersed position.

Claim 11 (original): Apparatus according to claim 9, wherein the cooling member is as defined in claim 4.

Claim 12 (original): Filled confectionery obtained by the process of claim 8, wherein the weight ratio of filling to the outer shell is within the range of 0.5 to 5.

Claim 13 (new): A process according to claim 5, wherein cooling member comprises stainless steel.

Claim 14 (new): A process for producing a filled sugar confectionery article according to claim 8, wherein said edible ingredients are selected from the group consisting of food colorings, flavorings, acidulents, and mixtures thereof.

Claim 15 (new): A process for producing a filled sugar confectionery article according to claim 8, wherein the weight ratio of the filling composition to the outer shell in the filled sugar confectionery article obtained from step 3) is the range of 0.5 to 5.